

Remarks – Support for Ottawa SMEs Impacted by Blockades
February 18th, 2022
2-minute remarks

Thank you, merci [TBC: Minister Jaczek]. I am happy to join you and my colleagues, Minister Fortier and Yasir Naqvi. Thank you as well to all of our Ottawa Caucus colleagues who have been incredible advocates for their constituents through this challenging time.

As workers, small businesses, and people across country have struggled through the pandemic these past three weeks have been even more difficult for the small businesses here at the heart of our nation's capital.

Whether it's Elgin, Bank, Sparks or the Market, I've heard from entrepreneurs and small businesses across Ottawa. Just when businesses across our province have been opening their doors again, businesses here have had to close theirs for the safety of their staff and their customers. This is unacceptable and it has to stop.

C'est inacceptable que des petites entreprises aient eu à fermer en raison de ces barrages illégaux. [It is not acceptable that small businesses have had to shut down because of this illegal blockade.]

This \$20 million dollar from our government will bring much-needed relief to heavily impacted Ottawa businesses. I also want to thank Invest Ottawa for their ongoing collaboration with FedDev Ontario to deliver this support.

Today's announcement is just one more step our government is taking to support small businesses as we have since the start of the pandemic. That's why we've invested in crucial supports including the Canada Emergency Wage, Wage Subsidy, Rent Subsidy, Hardest-Hit Business Recovery Program, and the recently extended Lockdown supports.

Businesses have relied on these programs and will continue to be able to count on us to bridge to recovery.

As the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister have said alongside Ministers Mendicino and Blair, Canadians have the right to peaceful protest, but no one has the right to illegally occupy the streets of our cities, disturb our communities, and cause serious economic harm by shutting down businesses and preventing hard-working Canadians from being able to work.

I want everyone to know, that we will continue to have your backs through the pandemic and as we drive a strong, inclusive, and sustainable economic recovery.

Thank you very much, **Merci tous le monde**, over to you [TBC: Minister Fortier].